DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 023 660 TE 000 768

Teaching of English Language Arts, Problems and Recommendations A Report of the Connecticut English and Reading Advisory Committee.

Connecticut State Dept. of Education, Hartford.

Report No-BULL-107

Pub Date [68]

Note-31p.

EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.65

Descriptors-Administrative Policy, Administrator Responsibility, Articulation (Program), Composition (Literary), Course Content, *Curriculum Development, *Curriculum Problems, *English Instruction, Inservice Teacher Education, *Language Arts, Multimedia Instruction, Preservice Education, Teacher Administrator Relationship, Teacher Attitudes, *Teacher Education, Teaching Conditions, Teaching Load, Teaching Methods

Nineteen crucial problems that are inhibiting continued improvement of English and reading education are identified by a committee of the Connecticut State Department of Education. The problems are grouped under four main headings: (1) content and method, (2) articulation, (3) teaching conditions, (4) teacher education and reeducation. Some of the problems considered under these headings are the use of multi-media for instruction, the utilization of resources outside the school community, and the provision of effective teaching facilities and supervisory assistance. Following each statement of a particular problem are recommendations for solving it, and at the conclusion of the report, six major recommendations to insure continual strengthening of English and reading instruction are formulated. (LH)

Teaching of English Language Arts

Problems and Recommendations

A Report of the
Connecticut English
And Reading Advisory
Committee

TE000768

Bulletin No. 107

Connecticut State
Department of Education

Box 2219, Hartford, Conn. 06115
Telephone: 527-6341 Code: 203

Teaching of English Language Arts

Problems and Recommendations

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

A Report of the Connecticut English And Reading Advisory Committee

ED023660

Connecticut English and Reading Advisory Committee

Dr. Joan Kerelejza, *Chairman,*
Coordinator of Instruction
Farmington Public Schools

Helen Estes, *Recorder* (1966-67),
Lecturer in English Education
University of Hartford

Dr. Robert F. Kinder, *Consultant,*
English and Reading Education Consultant
State Department of Education

Mrs. Julia Benedict (1965-66)
Kindergarten Teacher
North Haven Public Schools

Gary Burgard
Director of English
Hamden Public Schools

Evelyn Copeland
Director of English
Fairfield Public Schools

Mrs. Helen Cornett (1965-66)
Third Grade Teacher
Groton Public Schools

Julia Fleming
Elementary School Principal
Danbury Public Schools

Dr. Mary Elizabeth Fowler
Professor of English
Central Connecticut State College

Dr. M. Agnella Gunn (1965-66)
Visiting Professor, English Education
University of Connecticut

Mrs. Alma Hinman (1966-67)
Kindergarten Teacher
Middletown Public Schools

Mrs. Verna MacMillian
Junior High School Principal
West Hartford Public Schools

Mrs. Rossalie Pinkham
Assistant Professor of Education
Southern Connecticut State College

John Sutton
Junior High English Teacher and Chairman
Darien Public Schools

Janet Sprout
Assistant Department Head, Language Arts
Norwalk Public Schools

Ralph Wadsworth
English Curriculum Specialist
Glastonbury Public Schools

Mrs. Dorothy Wass
Fourth Grade Teacher
West Hartford Public Schools

Dr. Charles D. Yetman
Senior High School Principal
Hartford Public Schools

The members of the committee sincerely hope that this report will be read widely and will serve as a basis for discussion that stimulates group evaluation, planning, and action on the changes that need to be made *now* if schools are to offer ever-improving programs.

Contents

This Report 5
Development 5
Content 5
Use 6

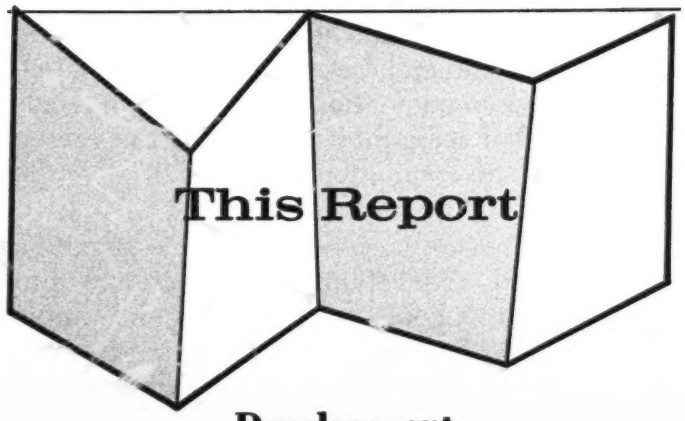
I. Problems of Content and Method 7
Strengthening the Content Of English Language Arts 7
Providing for All Students 11
Using Multi-Media for Instruction 13

II. Problems of Articulation 14
Building Program Continuity Between Educational Levels 14
Utilizing Resources Outside The School Community 16

III. Problems of Teaching Conditions 19
Assigning a Reasonable Teaching Load .. 19
Providing Effective Teaching Facilities .. 20
Supplying Supervisory Assistance 21

IV. Problems of Teacher Education and Reeducation 23
Strengthening Undergraduate Preparation 23
Reshaping Graduate Training 25
Vitalizing Inservice Education 26

Major Recommendations 29



Development

In December, 1966, the Commissioner of Education appointed a Connecticut English and Reading Advisory Committee. The 15 members of the committee have been, or are, successful English language arts teachers. They represent classroom teachers, supervisors, and administrators at all levels of education, kindergarten through graduate school. The Commissioner's charge to the committee was

> *. . . to identify problems in the way of continued improvement of English and reading education at all educational levels throughout the state and, when possible, to suggest likely solutions to these problems.*

For the next two years, committee members talked with hundreds of people employed in and concerned with English and reading education throughout the state. They studied the professional literature and looked closely at school programs as they are today and as they will need to be in the near future. They met regularly each month to discuss what they had learned and to consolidate their findings.

Content

The committee has identified 19 crucial problems—each containing many sub-problems—that are inhibiting continued improvement of English and reading education in the state. These problems are grouped under four sections of this report:

I. Problems of Content and Method
II. Problems of Articulation
III. Problems of Teaching Conditions
IV. Problems of Teacher Education and Reeducation

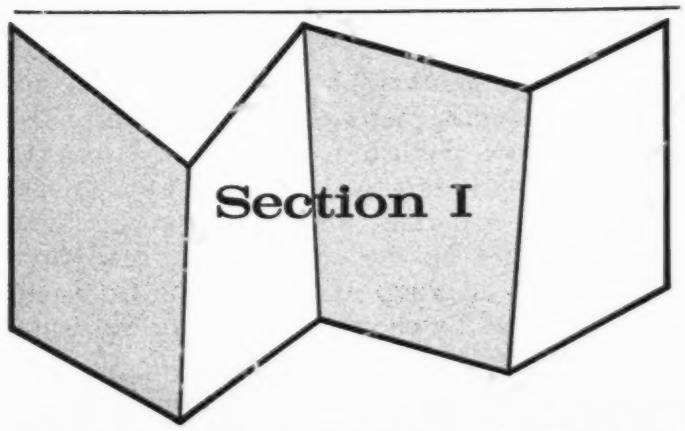
Following each statement of a particular problem are recommendations for resolving it—not all of the recommendations that might be made, but those that seem most feasible in the present thinking of the committee.

Some of the recommendations—suggested changes and innovations in operational procedures and school practices—can be implemented with little expense. Others are more costly. Some are too costly for a small school system to fund completely on its own. Members of the committee wish to stress, however, that even these expensive recommendations are vital. They suggest that small school systems seek some bases for supporting them: groups of school systems working together, professional organizations, private foundations, state and federal government. The committee urges school systems to do what they can most effectively do alone. But it also urges them to search actively for other means for funding improvements too costly for local support.

On the final page of this report, committee members have spelled out six major recommendations, all of which they believe must be operative to insure continued strengthening of English and reading instruction in Connecticut.

Use

While the committee's report originally was written at the request of and for the Commissioner of Education, it carries implications for many others as well. The Commissioner, the State Board of Education, and the State Department of Education can facilitate the task of improving English and reading education throughout the state. But working alone they cannot *insure* it. Such improvement must be a cooperative enterprise that also involves local schools, regional groupings within the state, colleges and universities, professional organizations, publishers of educational materials, the Commission on Higher Education—and, most important, teachers and parents throughout the state who must actively strive for, support, and secure improvements in education.



Problems of Content and Method

Strengthening the Content Of English Language Arts

1 *What are the English language arts? The subject of English seems to lack generally agreed-upon structure. What is the content of an English arts curriculum? Should the structure be based on process rather than content?*

Recommendation

Information concerning what many people feel to be the proper concerns of the subject should be provided to local school staffs. State Department of Education guidelines that spell out such information can be of inestimable value in giving direction to local curriculum planners charged with the responsibility of defining the structure of the subject.

2 *How can changes in the study of language be made most expeditiously? If one aspect of English is language, how can teachers be reeducated, curriculums be changed, and programs be developed to focus attention on the need to take a total approach—including early and systematic training in the names of letters and in phonics, syntax, semantics, vocabulary development, history of the language, psychological and cultural effects of language—to the study of the English language?*

Recommendations

A—Part of the solution lies in alerting teachers to new instructional materials that are currently available from publishers—instructional materials that attend to this total approach to language study. Such materials, and the approach they embody, could be the subject of a workshop sponsored by a group of schools, the Connecticut Council of Teachers of English, or the State Department of Education.

B—A stronger solution would be a series of six-week summer workshops, staffed by creative teachers familiar with this approach to language study, whose aim would be to develop units of study and detailed, logically sequenced, individual lesson plans demonstrating how to teach this "New English." A group of school systems, a college, or the State Department of Education might sponsor such workshops.

3 *How can increased attention to the development of skill in listening and speaking be stimulated? How can a balance be struck among the various communication skills—a balance that would give more emphasis than is currently given to the skills in listening and speaking? How can teaching these skills be made a vital element of English language arts courses in the secondary grades as well as in the elementary program?*

Recommendations

A—Someone must identify and define the listening skills and develop a scope and sequence of these skills.

B—Having identified the listening skills and decided on a scope and sequence, a local school system or a group of local systems should set up a workshop to suggest techniques for teaching listening skills.

C—The State Department of Education through its curriculum guidelines should emphasize the need for developing effective programs, K-12, in the speaking and listening skills.

D—A group of schools, the Connecticut Council of Teachers of English, or the State Department of Education could sponsor conferences and workshops at which experts in speech education,

even in speech therapy, are invited to share their knowledge with classroom teachers, K-12.

E—Greater attention to these skills on the part of classroom teachers should in time result in renewed efforts by publishers to produce materials for teaching speaking and listening better than those currently available. Even more pressure could be brought to bear on publishers if gifted teachers were encouraged to produce materials designed to teach these skills effectively. Such encouragement might be provided by a summer work session sponsored by a group of schools or by the State Department of Education or by a publishing company.

F—Local school staffs should be encouraged to secure funds to provide speech and listening laboratories for both secondary and elementary school students. Where local funds are not available, the State Department of Education should encourage schools to utilize appropriate state and federal funds for this purpose.

4

How can pupils be taught to do effective reading in such specific subject areas as social studies, science, and mathematics?

Recommendations

A—Local school systems or a group of systems might run workshops for teachers in which reading specialists and teachers, K-12, who have developed successful methods for teaching reading in these subjects, could demonstrate and discuss their techniques.

B—Local school systems should hire reading specialists to assist content teachers.

C—College staffs training teachers of these subjects should discuss and implement ideas for strengthening the attention given to the teaching of reading in their subject.

5

How can departmentalized schools be encouraged to build stronger developmental reading programs through grade 12? How can local staffs be convinced that they must consider such programs in planning curricula?

Recommendations

A—Strong recommendations by state professional organizations and by the State Department of Education should encourage the establishment and improvement of developmental reading programs in all secondary schools.

B—Local school systems should continue standardized and diagnostic testing of student reading abilities throughout the secondary grades. The results of these test programs would in themselves convince teachers of the need for developmental work in reading. The State Department of Education and professional organizations of English and reading teachers should join together to encourage such secondary school testing programs.

C—Groups of schools and colleges or universities, the Connecticut Council of Teachers of English and the Connecticut Association for Reading Research, or the State Department of Education should plan and sponsor conferences and workshops on the teaching of developmental reading in secondary schools.

How can composition programs be improved? What can be done to help local school staffs to establish more effective programs in the teaching of composition?

Recommendations

A—The State Department of Education curriculum guidelines should recommend that school staffs develop spiral curriculums that give children early and repeated teaching and practice in writing.

B—The Connecticut Council of Teachers of English or the State Department of Education should compile and distribute annual booklets similar to the National Council of Teachers of English publication *Promising Practices in the Teaching of English*. They should urge teachers, possibly by offering payment for articles, to contribute to such booklets.

C—A group of school systems or the State Department of Education should hire an itinerant consultant specifically for composition who could have frequent contact with local school systems to analyze existing programs and to recommend improvements.

7 *How can the teaching of values be incorporated into the program? To what extent is the English language arts teacher responsible for teaching aesthetic and moral values? To what degree is the teaching of values the goal of school literature programs? How can schools deal with the problem of censorship of reading lists?*

Recommendations

A—Local schools should establish clear-cut statements regarding their responsibility for teaching the democratic charter, values, and aesthetics.

B—The censorship of school reading lists on the grounds that the selections offend groups within the community might be dealt with by a strong "Right to Teach . . ." statement made by the State Department of Education. Also various professional organizations—such as the Connecticut Education Association, Connecticut Federation of Teachers, Connecticut Council of Teachers of English, the Connecticut Heads of English Departments, and the Connecticut School Library Association—could establish programs to assist teachers and/or school systems under fire from community pressure groups.

Providing for All Students

8 *How can the needs of all students be provided for? How can specific programs in the teaching of English language arts be developed for such diverse students as the disadvantaged, the slow learner, the problem reader, the emotionally disturbed, the non-native speaker of English, the intellectually gifted, the creative child?*

Recommendations

A—The State Department of Education should encourage the establishment of regional centers staffed by teachers highly skilled in techniques of diagnosis and remediation, and equipped with a wide variety of educational materials to serve students with such special problems as physical handicaps, perceptual difficulties, emotional disturbances, or cultural dislocation.

B—Local school staffs should be encouraged to involve the parents of students with special problems or special abilities in their children's school programs.

C—Local school systems should cooperate in planning and offering special programs or courses for gifted students. Four high schools, for example, might find it feasible to offer a course in short story writing or literary criticism to classes composed of the very brightest of each school's students. Local colleges could also be asked to give Saturday courses to such students.

9

How can a variety of patterns of organizing students and teachers for instruction be encouraged? How can team teaching, individualized instruction, computer-assisted instruction, educational-television, multi-level teaching, cross-grade grouping, and other ideas be effectively brought to the attention of classroom teachers? How can such programs be implemented when found desirable?

Recommendations

A—The State Department of Education curriculum guidelines should mention these programs and list experiments with them carried out in Connecticut.

B—One of the state professional organizations or the State Department of Education should establish a permanent committee to keep local administrators, supervisors, and teachers in the state informed concerning the latest developments in organizational patterns.

C—One of the state professional organizations or the State Department of Education should develop a bulletin or newsletter to keep local school staffs informed of state, federal, and private foundation funds available for experimenting with new organizational patterns and the means for securing such funds.

Using Multi-Media for Instruction

10 *How can teachers make the best use of multi-media materials? With so little time to preview new materials, how can teachers and supervisors make intelligent decisions concerning purchase and use of new commercial materials?*

Recommendation

A committee of classroom teachers established by a school system or by a group of school systems working together should list and review commercially produced materials, such as recordings, film strips, transparencies, motion pictures, video tapes, even textbooks. The committee's work should be widely distributed among its members.

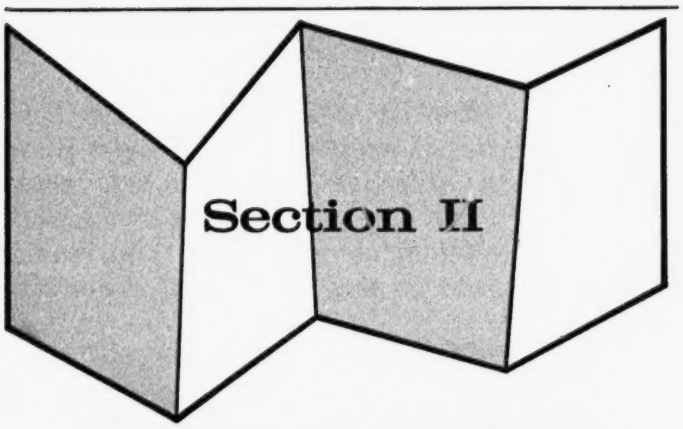
11 *How can money be made available to purchase multi-media materials?*

Recommendations

A—Local school systems, groups of school systems, and the State Department of Education should provide consultants in multi-media who would instruct local school staffs in how to get federal and state money available for purchasing these materials.

B—State professional organizations and the State Department of Education should encourage regional groupings of local school systems to share the expense of expensive multi-media materials and equipment.

C—Groups of school systems, the Connecticut Council of Teachers of English, or the State Department of Education should set up workshops to train teachers in the development of multi-media materials.



Problems of Articulation

Building Program Continuity Between Educational Levels

12 *How can articulation be strengthened between the programs of the elementary school, the junior high school, the senior high school, and the college?*

Articulation is important whenever a pupil moves from grade to grade or teacher to teacher, but the problems of articulation are likely to be more acute as he moves from elementary to junior high school to senior high school and to college. Any of the following problems may be involved:

- Long-range objectives are not coordinated.
- Skill building is not correlated.
- Cognitive skills develop by chance rather than design.
- Materials are not correlated.
- Some materials and activities are repeated unnecessarily.
- Some needs of pupils are neglected because of the assumption that they have been provided for elsewhere.
- Some skills that pupils have practiced are lost by default.
- An individual teacher's good practices or innovations are not shared.
- Some good ventures abort from lack of support or carry-through.
- A teacher's natural resistance to change is not challenged.
- Absorption in the immediate situation tends to restrict the teacher's vision of long-range planning beyond that for the immediate class or immediate educational level.

Recommendations

Means for implementation of these recommendations vary from those accomplished by a personal exchange between two teachers to those that might be fulfilled by the pooling of resources by a group of communities.

A—Strive for a sequential curriculum of skills, concepts, cognitive growth, methods, and materials from kindergarten through grade 12 (or grade 14, where community colleges exist).

- Provide a K-12 consultant whose full-time responsibility is to develop and coordinate curriculum with the teachers.
- Develop an information retrieval center for easy access to each child's personal and cumulative record of reading experiences, writing, independent projects, test scores, etc.
- Emphasize the importance of diagnosis by providing teachers with assistance in making diagnoses.
- Involve teachers from various educational levels (including college) in developing courses of study.
- Set up a permanent curriculum committee of teachers with more vertical than horizontal representation.

B—Devise ways of bringing teachers of different grade levels together as often as possible in a variety of situations.

- Arrange an exchange of visiting days between elementary and secondary; secondary and college; teachers and administrators; within one school system and between communities.
- Arrange an exchange of teaching assignments between junior and senior high schools; between high school and college instructors for a week, or month, or semester.
- Bring teachers together from different educational levels for inservice programs to share ideas and plan vertically; define the core that runs through all education.
- Set up a permanent curriculum planning and revision committee with representatives from all levels, including college.
- Encourage attendance at professional conferences and conventions at the state, regional, and national levels.

C—Capitalize on administrative assistance, prerogatives, and know-how to improve articulation between different educational levels. The administration of a school system or a group of school systems working together might undertake any of the following activities:

- Provide time, money, and people to develop the good ideas and utilize the human resources within the school community.
- Provide for a teacher-in-residence, visiting scholar, poet, or novelist in residence—an extra person on the staff for a month, semester, or year—to move from one educational level to another, to sit in on a variety of staff and administrative meetings, to act as a catalyst, academic scavenger, gadfly, or peddler of ideas.
- Budget for college professors or other visiting lecturers to be speakers, organizers of workshops or inservice courses, or part-time consultants for curriculum or teacher-training.
- Supplement permanent K-12 coordinator with a part-time university consultant.
- Subsidize attendance by teachers at state, regional, and national conferences and conventions.
- When working with a departmentalized staff, devise a time schedule flexible enough to permit more visiting between teachers without loss of time in the classroom.

Utilizing Resources Outside The School Community

13 *How can articulation be strengthened between a school community and educational facilities outside its immediate system?*

Any of the following problems may exist:

- Teachers are often unaware of services that are available from the State Department of Education.
- Administrators have so many demands on their time that curriculum is left to staff members.
- Channels for easy communication between communities do not exist.
- Teachers do not have the time to keep up with research, to say nothing of indulging in their own research.

- Most innovations and improvements make a heavy demand on non-existent time, money, and people.
- Once in the classroom, new teachers too often find that teaching is a process of trial and error (swim or sink) at a time when they could most benefit from the assistance of those professors back at the university.
- Numerous incidents indicate a willingness, even eagerness, on the part of universities and schools to cooperate. But lack of time, leadership, or money leaves the project on the planning table.

Recommendations

A—The State Department of Education might assist in a number of ways.

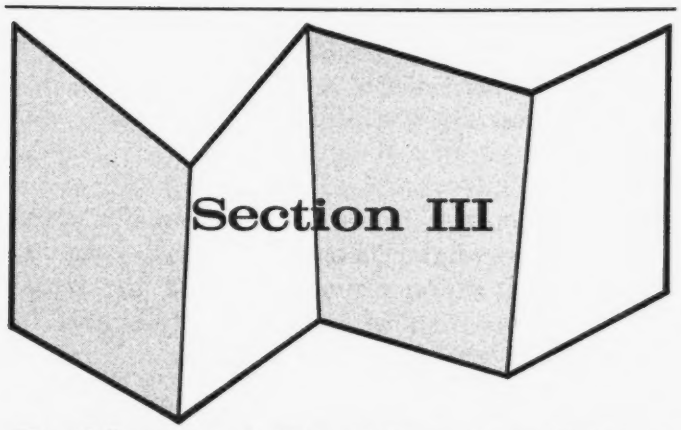
- Organize teams to go to a school system and give a one- or two-day workshop on curriculum building, problems of censorship, services of the State Department of Education, etc.
- Publish a newsletter—concisely composed for the busy teacher—that describes services available to schools.
- Establish one or two demonstration centers where teachers from different schools can come together to observe successful practices, discuss techniques, and share ideas.
- Establish several instructional materials centers throughout the state.
- Compile and keep up-dated a list of all teachers of English language arts in the state.
- Publish an honor roll—à la National Council of Teachers of English—of schools that make commendable provisions of time, money, exchange visits, and other activities for improving articulation or of schools that have been unusually successful in achieving articulation.
- Foster additional means of pooling or sharing good ideas and successful practices, as has already been done with such federally supported projects as METRO, SPRED, and the Watertown venture.

B—Schools and colleges should work together to bridge the gap between school and college.

- Explore ways and means for developing teacher training far beyond present practices.
- Develop a continuous program of exchanging instructors between school and campus.
- Encourage schools, colleges, and universities to appoint a liaison person responsible for bringing school and campus together.

C—Professional organizations at the state, regional, and national levels provide opportunities for exchanging ideas and resources across different educational levels and categories. Such organizations can encourage better articulation in several ways.

- Encourage classroom teachers to attend and become involved in professional organizations. At a professional meeting, even the coffee break is valuable for exchange of ideas.
- Encourage administrators to give curriculum a prominent spot at their professional meetings.
- Encourage administrators to attend reading and English conferences.



Problems of Teaching Conditions

Assigning a Reasonable Teaching Load

14 *What is a reasonable teaching load for teachers of English language arts and reading at various levels of school, K-12, if effective instruction is to be insured?*

Recommendations

A—A teacher's duties should be assigned with appropriate regard for his special talents, general abilities and preparation, and for the best interests of the student and teacher.

B—Class size should be scaled according to the abilities and maturity of the students and according to the type of program being offered.

- Low ability classes, including classes for the culturally disadvantaged, should be limited to 15.
- In innovative and experimental programs—e.g. large group presentations, seminar groups, etc.—class size may vary considerably depending on the purpose of the program.
- Kindergarten classes should be limited to 15.
- First grade classes should be limited to 20.
- Average or above average classes in grades two through 12 should be limited to 25.

C—In departmentalized schools, English language arts and reading teachers should be given class assignments that permit effective teaching.

- Such teachers should be assigned no more than four classes, each of which meets four or five class periods each week.

- Such teachers should be assigned no more than two markedly different class preparations a day. A *preparation* as used here is defined as planning for one ability level or one grade level.

D—Since the teaching of composition is a prime responsibility of the teacher of English language arts, time must be provided during the school day for correction of student writing and for conferences with individual students.

E—Local school systems should employ non-instructional personnel to assume the non-teaching duties of English language arts and reading teachers.

Providing Effective Teaching Facilities

15 *What sort of teaching facilities stimulate effective teaching of English language arts and reading?*

Recommendations

A—Classrooms and department offices for English language arts and reading teachers should be located so as to have easy access to the school's central library or resource center.

B—Facilities should be provided for large-group presentations, seminar discussions, conferences and diagnostic testing, teacher work space, and reading laboratories.

C—Every school, elementary and secondary, should have a central library equipped and staffed according to the standards of the American Library Association.

D—A classroom properly equipped for teaching English language arts or reading should contain the following:

- an adequate supply of up-to-date textbooks
- periodicals
- supplementary books (classroom libraries)
- reference books (including an unabridged dictionary)

- an overhead projector
- a tape recorder
- a record player
- a projection screen
- facilities for darkening the room
- adequate book shelving
- a filing cabinet or other filing facilities

E—Every classroom should have easy access to additional audiovisual equipment including film projectors, filmstrip projectors, and television receivers.

Supplying Supervisory Assistance

16 *What sort of supervisory assistance is needed to upgrade English language arts and reading instruction?*

Recommendations

A—A local school district should have either a single English language arts director, K-12, or one director for the elementary and one for the secondary level. Each district also needs a reading director, K-12, or an elementary school reading director, plus a secondary school reading director. Close articulation is essential when there are two directorships.

B—School districts too small to warrant special subject directors should hire specialists in elementary and secondary English instruction and in elementary and secondary reading instruction to work part-time as consultants to directors of elementary and secondary education, principals, and teachers.

C—In every departmentalized school, a department chairman who is highly knowledgeable in the fields of English and English teaching should be appointed. His work schedule should provide time for leadership in supervising teachers and in developing an effective English program.

D—The director, supervisor, and department head should have a strong professional background, including the study of supervision and administration. His preparation in English and

in English education should at least equal that of exceptionally well-qualified teachers. It should include studies in linguistics, semantics, speech, educational research, audiovisual procedures and techniques, and methods of teaching reading, either as a part of or in addition to the usual liberal arts program of an English major and the general program of the education student. It is also highly desirable that the director, supervisor, or department head have successful experience in teaching English at every level of his supervisory responsibility.

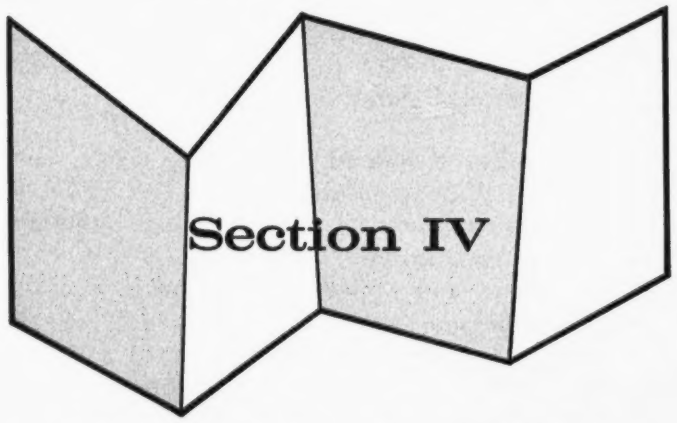
E—The duties of the director, supervisor, or department head should include the following:

- designing means for upgrading the curriculum and adapting it to the needs of students of various achievement levels, including the preparation, implementation, and evaluation of curriculum guides and conducting the initial screening of new textbooks and other teaching tools before adoption
- providing inservice education programs for the growth of all teachers
- participating in the hiring of new teachers and in the evaluation of the work of teachers.
- interpreting curriculum changes and curriculum progress for the school administration and for the public
- establishing criteria for the grouping of students and assisting in the scheduling of the assignments of teachers

F—All English language arts teachers should be provided with consultant services designed to assist them in improving the developmental reading program in their daily teaching.

G—All personnel charged with the supervision of any aspect of the English language arts program should work closely and cooperatively with each other at all levels to insure articulation and coordination of the total program.

H—Personnel charged with supervision should work with principals in establishing criteria for evaluating instructional progress and in executing projects or activities related to the English program.



Problems of Teacher Education And Reeducation

Strengthening Undergraduate Preparation

17 *What is crucial in the undergraduate training programs for prospective teachers of English language arts? What kinds of training can colleges provide that English language arts teachers desperately need?*

Specific areas in which the prospective teacher needs training include knowledge of linguistics, contemporary literature, reading skills, social changes, and what recent research has discovered about how children learn. He needs to be able to recognize a specific teaching situation as a part of a planned sequence of learning, to be able to recognize the pupil's instructional level, and to select instructional material appropriate for his level of achievement and maturity, to use suggestions for improvement of instruction, to promote student development in oral and written language, to teach writing effectively, and to use modern techniques and materials of instruction.

Recommendations

A—The five-year training program for prospective teachers is a promising trend. Colleges are encouraged to explore the feasibility of including in this program a one-year internship in practice teaching—perhaps during the fourth year.

B—Ideally, prospective teachers will experience in their college instructors models of good teaching as well as sources of information. College instruction should include:

- recognition of individual abilities, needs, and interests through modification in the mode of course instruction to reach more individuals in each class group
- motivation and opportunity for wide reading
- encouragement and guidance which would lead each prospective teacher toward a strong commitment to a humanistic approach, both to his subject and to his future pupils
- development of an inquiring attitude of mind

C—Liberal arts courses from all three of the areas listed below should be required for prospective teachers of English language arts, K-12:

- history of language, syntax, semantics, vocabulary development, the psychological and cultural effects of language
- major literary genres—English, American, and world literature
- advanced composition beyond the college freshman English course

D—Prospective teachers who cannot demonstrate competence in writing or speaking should be required to take additional training in these areas at college.

E—College faculties should consider each of the following in developing a program for professional competence in teaching:

- individualize the future teacher's program to fill in gaps in preparation or background
- provide more training in the broad English language arts-reading complex, placing equal weight on substantive content and skills development
- promulgate ideas for interdisciplinary approaches to learning
- use a variety of teaching methods
- provide an overview of English language arts teaching, K-12, stressing similarities and differences at different levels
- stress means for articulation, such as cumulative records and K-12 participation in development of curriculum, objectives, programs, and evaluation

- emphasize the teaching of reading by requiring courses in: (1) developmental reading (2) assessment of reading needs, and (3) children's and/or young adult literature

F—Eighteen to 30 hours should be required in courses which lead to professional competence in teaching, the number of hours being to some extent dependent on the needs of the prospective teacher.

G—Courses should be planned sequentially, the sequence to depend on the nature of the subject and the needs of the prospective teacher.

Reshaping Graduate Training

How can graduate study be planned and focused so as to have definite relation to the study and teaching of English language arts and yet be flexible enough to meet the individual professional needs of teachers?

Recommendations

A—Attention should be given to promoting balanced graduate programs for preparation of English language arts teachers, K-12. Preparation in substantive content should not be heavily weighted in favor of literature. Composition, language study, and skills development (particularly reading) are equally important.

B—All English language arts teachers, K-12, should have successfully completed:

- a minimum of one course (three semester hours) in composition beyond freshman English
- a minimum of one course (three semester hours) in the new grammars
- a minimum of one course (three semester hours) in the teaching of reading

C—In addition to the training specified above, secondary school English language arts teachers should have successfully completed the following:

- a second course in advanced composition carrying three credits (to total six semester hours in composition beyond the freshman year)
- a minimum of one course (three semester hours) in the history of the English language (either during undergraduate or graduate preparation)
- a minimum of two courses (six semester hours) in literary criticism and/or the teaching of reading (either during undergraduate or graduate preparation)
- a concentration or depth study in composition, language or skills development which would qualify the prospective teacher as a teaching specialist.

D—Efforts should be made to encourage communications between colleges and universities which offer graduate programs and the schools that employ their graduates.

E—Local school systems are urged to encourage graduate study by establishing sabbatical leaves for this purpose, perhaps with stipulation that the teacher will return to the system.

Vitalizing Inservice Education

19 *In what ways can inservice education programs be improved so as to better serve the needs of teachers, schools, and children?*

Although colleges are taking a critical look at their preparation of teachers, it seems unrealistic to expect that even dramatic changes in college programs will produce teachers who are *fully* prepared to cope with the infinite variety of current problems and practices relating to instruction in English language arts. Each community has its unique character and problems. Local boards of education must expect to take on responsibility for inservice training of new teachers and, if the instructional program is to improve, inservice opportunities for the entire professional staff.

Teachers, particularly elementary teachers, are bombarded from all sides with curriculum innovation and revision to the point of frustration. Far too many communities rely on after-school inservice training as a cure. Little observable improvement in classroom practices has ever resulted from such piecemeal efforts.

Recommendations

A—Inservice training is most valuable when it involves the participants in the identification of topics to be covered and permits in-depth consideration of actual classroom problems faced by teachers.

B—Released time, reduced teaching loads, and paid summer work are more productive procedures than after-school meetings. But even these call for careful planning, sharp focus, and obtainable goals.

C—Inservice activities that might be undertaken by a school system or by a group of school systems working cooperatively include:

- workshops for teachers new to the system preceding the opening of the school year (This orientation should be conducted by those responsible for supervision of the English language arts program, assisted by classroom teachers of proven excellence.)
- a "buddy system" in which an exemplary experienced teacher assumes a one-year responsibility for serving as a resource person for a teacher new to the system
- concentrated help for teachers from English language arts and reading consultants in the form of classroom observation, followed by demonstration lessons or individual and small group conferences
- planned visiting days for all teachers
- summer remedial reading programs, where teachers, K-12, learn to work effectively with disabled readers in the morning, and become involved in afternoon sessions devoted to the study of diagnostic and corrective techniques (The study sessions should be under the supervision of language arts and reading specialists and visiting consultants.)
- "sharing" workshops in which classroom teachers are the key figures as they discuss methods and materials they have developed with each other

- college or university extension courses brought to a local community and paid for by the school system
- workshop designed to improve articulation and coordination among auxiliary services that contribute to an effective English language arts program—social workers, health personnel, speech therapists, psychologists, librarians
- closed-circuit television used for demonstration lessons and introduction of instructional materials
- curriculum workshops for principals
- employment of teachers during the summer to do curriculum study and revision
- released time for a series of faculty meetings devoted to curriculum improvement within a given school
- consultant services from colleges and universities, publishers, other school systems, and the State Department of Education to work with teachers on special problems
- periodic curriculum revision
- teacher attendance at conferences and meetings outside the school system, with expenses paid by the local school system.

D—All English language arts and reading teachers should have easy access to a well-stocked professional library containing professional publications and samples of available curriculum materials.

Major Recommendations

In order to strengthen English and reading education throughout Connecticut:

1. Local schools must initiate, plan, and execute English and reading education programs that more effectively serve the needs of students and abilities of teachers.

2. Groups of school systems working together must be formed to carry out services and programs too costly for local financing.

3. State professional organizations must plan, implement, and maintain additional programs and services that support improved instructional programs in English and reading.

4. Colleges and universities that train English language arts teachers must work closely with schools in evaluating present training programs and in developing new programs.

5. The state and its Department of Education must provide added services, staff, and funding that stimulate and support improved English and reading education in local schools.

6. Administrators, boards of education, and taxpayers must cooperate to provide time and money for school staffs to develop curriculum and to grow professionally.